

I was for a time puzzled by a certain uniformity in the direction of the leaves—not by any means always with the edges north and south. Especially was I puzzled in noting that the first opening of a flower of *Helianthus mollis* was to the south-east. But here came in what I think is a point I have established, that growth is rhythmic and not continuous, and that growths that start together are likely to rest together. A quantity of seeds, starting at the same time under the same day's warm sun, would naturally have similar resting phases. Seeds starting at other times, or under some peculiar conditions of vital power, would disarrange total uniformity in results.—THOMAS MEEHAN, *Germantown, Philadelphia.*

An additional poisonous plant.—D. T. MacDougal (Bulletin 9, part 1, Jan. 16, 1894; Minnesota Botanical Studies) gives in a convenient reference list the plants of Minnesota known to be poisonous, producing the symptoms called by physicians *dermatitis venenata*, or rhus poisoning. He mentions two species of *Ranunculus* in his enumeration, *R. septentrionalis* Poir. and *R. sceleratus* Linn. *Ranunculus acris* L. must be added to the list of known or reputed skin irritants, as the following account will show. This species, preserved in alcohol for over a year, was distributed to a university class for study, and in doing this the fingers and hands were frequently immersed in the alcohol of an olive-green color. A day or two afterwards an intense itching sensation was experienced. The softer skin between the fingers became red and covered with minute watery vesicles, or pustules, and after the inflammation had disappeared, the skin of the fingers began to crack, as if they were chapped. These symptoms were exactly similar, in my case, to the effects produced by contact with the poison ivy, *Rhus toxicodendron*. The watery acrid juice, so universal in the *Ranunculads* (dissipated in many forms in drying), had been extracted from the plants, and evaporating on the surface of the hands left behind the precipitated active irritating principle.

The wide distribution of the poison sumachs has been accomplished by the carrying of the drupes in the stomachs of birds. An instructive fact, which has come to light recently through the examination of crow stomachs, is the discovery that the fruits of the poison sumach, *Rhus venenata*, and poison ivy, *Rhus toxicodendron*, are eaten in large numbers by the crow. W. B. Barrows has in one case recorded that 153 seeds of the poison ivy were found in a single stomach. A single pound of dried excrement taken from a roost in the National Cemetery at Arlington, contained by actual count 1041 seeds of *Rhus toxicodendron* and 341 seeds of *Rhus venenata*, in addition to 3271 seeds of other sumachs, 95 seeds of *Juniperus Virginiana*, 10 seeds of *Cornus florida* and 6 seeds of *Nyssa sylvatica*.—JOHN W. HARSHBERGER, *University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia.*